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# Defining College Experiences and Changing Drinking Trends Over the Course of One Freshman Semester

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DEFINING COLLEGE EXPERIENCES AND CHANGING DRINKING TRENDS  
OVER THE COURSE OF ONE FRESHMAN SEMESTER

by  
Cipriano Apicelli III

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

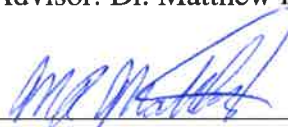
Oxford  
May 2014

Approved by

A blue ink signature of Dr. Matthew Reysen, written in a cursive style.

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## Abstract

The first semester of college is a formative stage in the lives of young adults. It is a period of transformation and adaptation, and certain experiences may set the tone for the rest of the student's college career. It has long been apparent that a number of problems at the level of secondary education can be traced to the use and, particularly, the abuse of alcohol. Problems with alcohol consumption as one of the contributing factors range from poor grades, emergency room visits, to events such as unwanted sexual advances and in extreme cases, even assaults. In this study, I attempt to find a connection between salient good and bad memories and changes in drinking behavior between the beginning and end of the semester. I asked participants to describe their three best and three worst experiences of the semester, then indicate whether alcohol was involved in each memory. Participants then described the amount and frequency with which they drank at the beginning of the semester and towards the end of the semester. Participants also filled out a short questionnaire and attempted to assess their change over the semester. Comparisons between the proportion of good memories involving alcohol and the proportion of bad memories involving alcohol yielded statistically significant results, suggesting that experiences with alcohol, especially with frequent drinkers, are not unidirectional. Proportion of good memories involving alcohol differed significantly between genders, with men having more good memories while drunk compared to women. Negative experiences did not differ significantly between genders. Men tended to drink more frequently than women, but their drinking trend was actually downward,

contrary to what was expected. Unfortunately, the relationship between memories and drinking trend was nearly zero. What this might suggest is that other factors affect drinking trend, or the bi-directionality of experiences for drinkers tend to balance each other out. The significant difference in drinking at the beginning of the semester might actually explain the downward trend for men if we take into account increased academic load, which would cause men to have to reduce their drinking more significantly than women would.

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## Defining College Experiences and Changing Drinking Trends Over the Course of the Freshman Semester

Drinking has become an inseparable part of the American college culture. The various positive aspects of alcohol consumption and its increasing availability have attracted many college students, but it comes with its fair share of problems. Alcohol consumption can negatively affect one's grades, contribute to unwanted aggression or sexual encounters, and result in injury, sickness, or even death. Many studies have examined drinking with expected and actual outcomes, but none so far have explicitly linked drinking behaviors with memories associated with those behaviors. The purpose of this study was to ask first year college students to record their three best and worst memories from their college career. They were then asked to indicate whether each memory involved alcohol use or not. Drinking habits at the beginning and end of the semester were recorded for each participant and contrasted with their memories. It was predicted that if more of participants' bad memories were associated with alcohol use than good memories, they would reduce their drinking over the course of the semester. Conversely, if the students' best memories were alcohol related and their worst were not, drinking would be reinforced and their self-reported drinking would be higher at the end of the semester than at the beginning.

As noted above, a number of studies have addressed the effects of alcohol

consumption on behavioral outcomes in college students. For example, in their 2004 study, Del Boca and his colleagues explored temporal variations in drinking among college freshman (Del Boca, Darkes, Greenbaum, Goldman, 2004). The researchers noticed that much of the past research on alcohol use during college years was confined to cross-sectional studies of short periods of time. These studies allow for a large sample size and a great general idea of alcohol use on college campuses, and have the added advantage of being quick and easy to distribute and complete. Unfortunately, the grand scale of these surveys mean the data is not overly detailed and changing trends can only be tracked from subject group to subject group. Instead of examining how one person's drinking habits change over the years, they track how drinking habits change from one cohort of students to the next. Del Boca and his colleagues wanted to examine variations in alcohol use, in both amount and frequency, on a more in-depth scale over a longer period of time, and they wanted to determine what variables may play into any trend that they discovered (Del Boca et al., 2004).

To meet this goal, the researchers performed a longitudinal study using detailed assessments of daily drinking for an entire year, three years in a row. The participants were 300 college freshmen whose families were identified as having either the presence or absence of alcohol abuse. After a school-wide screening, potential participants were invited to join the study and then further screened until the optimum sample was collected. Participants answered questions about their drinking habits, drug use, lifestyle, alcohol expectancies, and problems they had which were related to alcohol. Participants recorded alcohol use in sessions once a month both in person and over the phone. The four important measures used in the study were the TLFB for alcohol use, the Alcohol

Expectancy Questionnaire, the Sensation Seeking sub-scale of the Zuckerman-Kuhlman Personality Questionnaire, and the initial screening for family history of alcoholism. Data was compiled and analyzed in a three-step process. Drinking data was charted, looking at trends such as which days of the week involved the greatest amount of alcohol consumption and classifying individuals as binge drinkers, non-binge drinkers, and abstainers for each session. Researchers then created a Latent Growth Curve for the individuals who consumed alcohol at least once (participants who consumed no alcohol were included in much of the data analysis, but in this instance provided no value). Lastly, the covariates were added and compared in order to understand which factors affected drinking.

On a daily basis, Del Boca and his colleagues found that the busiest days for drinking were Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, with the only exceptions being holidays. Quantity was charted on a weekly basis and determined whether participants were listed as binge drinkers (4 or more drinks in a single sitting for women, 5 for men), non-binge drinkers (drank at least 1 day out of the week but did not meet binge criteria), or abstinent (did not drink at all over the course of a week) (Del Boca et al., 2004). This classification provided very interesting insight into the habits of students. During any given week, a majority of students (66% average) abstained from alcohol use. About half of the remaining students participated in binge drinking, and the remainder participated in non-binge drinking. However, the authors note that the composition of the three groups changed from week to week. Students who abstained one week could be found in the binge-drinking category the next week. This pattern of results indicated that a majority of participants participated in binge drinking at least once (Del Boca et al., 2004). Measures



of the mean drinks per week also shed light on how external factors and situations affect drinking trends. For example, Del Boca and colleagues found that students drank more in the beginning of the semester, during holidays, and over breaks, and they drank less during midterm and final exams. This means that the trend for the year was somewhat downward with large spikes over certain periods. When possible, predicting variables were accounted for. For instance, alcohol expectancy, gender, race, and living situation (off campus) all were significant predictors of alcohol use, with white males who lived off campus having the highest sensation seeking scores and being rated as the most likely to drink heavily. The researchers concluded that while a large majority of college students drink in a given year, and at least half of those who drink in a given week drink heavily, these sessions are not as consistent as prior research and surveys had suggested. This is indicated by the fact that in any given week, a majority of the participants abstained from alcohol and that the composition of this abstaining group changed each week. This abstinence or indulgence may be due to various contingencies that affect each student's daily life. Tests and holidays were two external factors that had a large effect on amount and frequency of alcohol consumption.

In a more recent study on this topic, Dumas, Wells, Tremblay, and Graham (2013) conducted research on first year college students in order to study the consequences of drinking, specifically the negative consequences, and how they differed as a function of gender. Previous research indicates that overall, men experience more negative consequences than women when alcohol is involved. Such studies point to the fact that men are more likely to show outward aggression and recklessness and participate in drunk driving, vandalism, and assault than are women. Dumas and his fellow researchers

proceeded to track college students' drinking and activities through diary entries over the course of several months. They asked the participants to record how many standard drinks they consumed and to use the 'Negative Alcohol Consequences Scale' to track the negative experiences resulting from that drinking.

When looking at the data aggregately, Dumas and his colleagues noted that men experienced more negative consequences than women, supporting the previous research. The way the researchers collected data allowed them to investigate this topic in greater depth. When examining specific instances of drinking, women had a higher risk for certain behaviors or experiences than men, specifically having unplanned or unwanted and unprotected sex, blacking out, getting in verbal arguments, and riding along with drunk drivers. The researchers suggest that women might be in greater danger of certain consequences than men because of lower tolerance, difference in body mass/absorption of alcohol (it is documented fact that women will have high BACs than men who drink the same amount), and less experience being in intoxicated states.

In addition, people who drink often and heavily are more likely to have more negative experiences related to alcohol. Men, who have more mass and therefore can usually handle more alcohol, are often more accustomed to heavy drinking than women. They are much more likely to be involved in public displays of drunken behavior and open aggression. Women who are exposed to large doses of alcohol are often less experienced and resistant, which leads them to be open to sexual advances, bad decisions, and memory loss. Interestingly, the results also indicated that women are more likely to engage in unprotected sex while drunk than men are.

Overall, the results of this study suggest that we might expect strong correlations

between positive and negative experiences while people are intoxicated. In other words, those that drink heavily are bound to experience both positive and negative consequences. However, if we take into account the difference in how men and women handle alcohol (biologically), it might make sense that men have more positive experiences. Being of physically larger stature on the whole, they can consume more alcohol and they are less likely to become helpless or vulnerable. Women have more negative experiences wherein they drink enough to where they are more open to significantly negative events such as unwanted sexual contact. This type of consequence seems less likely to occur with men.

It has widely been noted that adolescents first entering college often do not have much experience drinking alcohol and, as a result, must be initiated into a culture of drinking. Over the course of their college career, however, many will become regular drinkers. The college environment is notorious for heavy drinking among students and many are concerned about the negative consequences that result from it. For example, driving under the influence and unforeseen sexual consequences often make the news and attract media attention. This begs the question, with all of the negative consequences associated with drinking, why do so many students continue to drink to excess? In a recent study, Park, Kim, and Sori (2013) note that no prior research has been done as to whether positive consequences associated with drinking have an effect on actual future drinking behavior. Operant conditioning is one theoretical construct that could be used to explain how positive outcomes associated with drinking could reinforce the behavior and affect drinking habits. According to the authors, positive consequences in this context might include stress relief, release of social inhibitions, and other psychosocial benefits.

In this experiment, what Park and his colleagues wanted to discover was how this effect operates among college students in regards to actual drinking, rather than merely focusing on plans or expectations.

The participants in the experiment were college students who were enrolled in an introductory psychology class who met the following two conditions: they had to be over 18 years old and they must have had at least one drink in the last year. Demographic information was collected to determine factors such as: race, Greek life status, age, and gender. Data was collected in the form of online questionnaires which were administered twice about a month apart. At both Time 1 and Time 2, participants completed The Comprehensive Effects of Alcohol questionnaire (Fromme, Stroot, & Kaplan, 1993) to determine expectations of alcohol use outcomes. The researchers used a scale for drinking amount/frequency in the last year (Time 1) and the last 30 days (Time 2). To rate positive consequences, they used the Positive Drinking Consequences Questionnaire (Corbin et al., 2008). They also included ratings for negative consequences.

After analyzing the data, the researchers found that positive consequences at Time 1 significantly predicted heavy drinking at Time 2. More surprising is that heavy drinking at Time 1 significantly predicted positive consequences at Time 2, meaning that the two factors had reciprocal effects. Negative consequences were not found to have a significant relationship on drinking amount. These results led Park, Kim, and Sori (2013) to conclude that the cycle of drinking and positive consequences related to alcohol consumption contribute to the continuation of heavy drinking among college students. Furthermore, they suggested that while positive consequences serve to further these habits, negative consequences do not seem to deter them. This result, in particular, helps

explain why drinking might persist despite the well documented and concerning outcomes which are possible.

Although these results are intriguing, one of the limitations of Park, Kim, and Sori (2013)'s study was the time scale. More specifically, these results were based off of only one month's worth of data. A longitudinal study observing drinking habits and consequences in the long term would provide more insight into the drinking behaviors of college undergraduates. The researchers also acknowledge that a portion of the students who participated in Time 1 did not complete the questionnaires for Time 2, and they were forced to compensate for this attrition. Ideally, this experiment and future experiments would have all subjects complete both questionnaires so that there is a one to one match. The results are interesting however, in that they demonstrate that for drinkers, the positive effects of alcohol use are a greater predictor of future usage than negative consequences.

Although many studies have been conducted that link alcohol expectancies to drinking habits, surprisingly little has been done to track actual consequences and exactly what type of consequences students likely face as a result of drinking. Negative consequences, especially physical symptoms like hangovers or vomiting, or dangerous situations like drunk driving, receive a lot of press, are stressed by anti-drinking campaigns, and are often times the subject of more research endeavors than positive consequences. Lee, Maggs, Neighbors, and Patrick (2011) speculate that this is because negative consequences are often more easily observed and external whereas positive consequences might be more difficult to document. It is easy to quantify how many hangovers one experiences, but how does one rate feelings of social disinhibition? Yet despite this, it might be observed that the positive consequences are of more importance

and value to the drinker, and the drinker is willing to bear the negative consequences of alcohol use in order to experience the more immediate but fleeting desirable effects. Consequence and expectancies differ from one another, and alcohol use seems to be supported and reinforced within college drinkers. Lee and her colleagues hypothesize that the reason for this is that positive consequences create a feed-forward process in which the reward reinforces the behavior, which then becomes associated more strongly with the reward and is more likely to be repeated. As such, the researchers expected that positive consequences would be more represented than negative consequence and more strongly tied to drinking behavior, and that the social learning theory suggests that is the reason that drinking continues.

The participants in Lee, Maggs, Neighbors, and Patrick (2011) study were 719 first year freshman students approached during college orientation. These students willingly completed the questionnaire and reported having at least one drink in the last 12 months. The questionnaire provided participants with a standard definition for a drink and measured frequency, amount, and consequences. Frequency was measured on a scale from less than once a month to every day. Amount in a single sitting, assuming the participant was not an abstainer, ranged from 1 to more than 12 drinks. Binge drinking was classified as having more than five drinks in one sitting, and the frequency of that was measured as well. Consequences were divided into multiple sections. Positive consequences included fun/social, positive image, and relaxation/coping. Negative consequences were divided into physical, behavioral, and driving. The ratings ranged from 'never happened' to 'happened more than four times' over the past year.

On average, participants reported drinking at least once every two weeks.

Drinking was positively correlated to both positive and negative consequences, and positive consequences were more frequently reported than negative consequences. The fun/social category was reported especially frequently, while driving consequences were reported the least frequently. Despite this, driving consequences were still significantly related to drinking frequency and amount, along with the fun/social and the physical consequences. The researcher's posit that students engage in drinking in order to attain the positive effects they know will come, and take their chances on the negative consequences, which often aren't as assured. Furthermore, the more one drinks, the harder rational decision-making becomes.

Overall, the studies described above suggest that alcohol has a large impact on the lives of college students. A number of factors contribute to drinking habits, especially expected outcomes. The studies suggest that positive consequences might have more effect on future drinking habits than negative consequences. The purpose of this study is to explicitly compare drinking trends to defining college experiences – the three best and three worst memories of their freshman semester. Participants were asked to record these memories, and then to indicate which of these memories involved alcohol use. In other words, they were asked to report whether they were consuming alcohol when the experience occurred. Participants were asked to self-report drinking frequency and amount at the beginning of the semester and at the end of the semester as well. I anticipate that individuals who had more bad experiences while drinking would show a reduced pattern of alcohol consumption from beginning to end. Those who experienced the best memories of their college career under the influence of alcohol, with fewer bad memories, are expected to maintain or increase their consumption.

## Method

### *Participants*

The participants were 141 college students from the University of Mississippi. The participants were selected on the condition that they were first semester freshman and were at least 18 years of age. Participants were awarded 1 hour of SONA credit for their Psychology class requirements. 77 of the participants were female, 36 were male, and 5 failed to identify their gender. 23 individuals were excluded from the data analyses due to either a failure to follow directions or (as noted above, as in common of studies of this type) because they were non-drinkers.

### *Materials and Design*

The research design was a questionnaire type study in which students were asked to report positive and negative memories, indicate whether those memories involved alcohol, and then answer a brief questionnaire (see Appendix B).

### *Procedure*

Participants signed up for one of multiple time slots available for the study, with a maximum of 25 students participating at a time. The study was conducted anonymously and all participants were given informed consent forms detailing their ability to withdraw from the study at any time and explaining any risks that may come with the study. For example, the form stated that the participants would be asked to discuss possibly sensitive



information about drinking behavior, suicidal behavior, and painful memories.

Information about where the University Counseling Center was and how to contact them was provided in case any participant felt they needed to talk to someone following their participation in the study. The experimental trials were conducted toward the end of the Fall 2013 Semester and participants were asked to consider that semester only when responding the questionnaire. To ensure anonymity, participants were asked to sit in every other row and they were instructed not to put their name or other identifying information on any of the papers they would be turning in.

The questionnaire contained two forms, one on which participants would describe their best and worst memories and the second measuring alcohol use from the beginning and end of their first semester. These forms were handed out separately and completed in steps in order to avoid response bias. If the participants knew that the study was about alcohol before or while they were filling out the memory portion, they might have been more likely to describe only experiences that involved alcohol use. Instead, no mention of alcohol was made until after all participants had completely filled out the memory portion of the survey.

In the memory portion of the survey, participants filled out six blank boxes with short descriptions of the three best and three worst memories they have from the past semester. Participants were then asked to indicate whether alcohol was involved in each memory they had described by checking boxes 'Yes' or 'No'. When the first form was completed, the second form was handed out and the instructions were given. The participants were asked to think back to the beginning of the semester and describe, on average, how often and how much they drank. Then, they were asked to consider where

they were at the moment in terms of drinking behavior, at the end of the semester, and rate how often and how much they drank on average. A standard definition of a drink was provided in order to gain an accurate and consistent measure. For the purposes of this study, a drink was defined as a bottle of beer, a glass of wine, a wine cooler, a shot glass of liquor, a mixed drink, or a similar drink containing alcohol. Finally, participants were asked to complete portion of the Hair Binge Drinking Questionnaire (Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel, and Page, 2011) and describe how they felt their habits had changed and why. This last measure was not used or represented in the data for this experiment but rather served as an aid for understanding the obtained results.

## Results and Discussion

### *The Effects of Positively and Negatively Valanced Memories on Drinking Behavior*

As noted above, at the outset of each experimental trial, participants were asked to report their best and absolute worst memories from the first semester of their freshman year – experiences that undoubtedly shaped their impressions of college life. The first analysis was conducted to determine whether a relationship existed between a computed measure of drinking trend (defined as increase or decrease in drinking from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester) and the proportion of both positive and negative memories that participants reported experiencing. The trend variable was computed by comparing ratings for drinking amount and frequency between the beginning of the semester (time 1) and the end of the semester (time 2). For example, if both amount and frequency increased by one increment from time 1 to time 2, the trend is +2. One of the original hypotheses suggested that if an individual had more negative experiences involving alcohol than they had positive ones, they would be likely to decrease their drinking either in terms of the amount they drank, the frequency with which they drank, or both (trend downwards). Conversely, it was hypothesized that an individual whose best experiences in college involved alcohol consumption with fewer alcohol-related consequences would increase the frequency or amount they drink (trend upwards).

As it turns out, these hypotheses were not supported by the data. A bivariate correlation comparing the drinking trend variable with the number of positive memories

related to alcohol was not statistically significant,  $r(116) = .10, p > .05$ . This result suggests that there was no relationship observed between the number of positive memories and participants' reported drinking trend. Similarly, A bivariate correlation comparing the drinking trend variable with the number of negative memories related to alcohol was not statistically significant,  $r(116) = .11, p > .05$ . This result suggests that there was no relationship observed between the number of negative memories and participants' drinking trend.

Overall, these results suggest that the memories recorded aren't related to trend. This may be because although these memories act as powerful reinforcers, positive or negative reinforcement from all the other, unrecorded experiences the participants had with alcohol are balancing or counteracting them. Prior research has suggested that negative experiences rarely cause reduction in drinking habits. Additionally, drinking habits may be affected by academic schedules and demands.

The next analysis involved determining whether a correlation existed between the proportion of good memories that involved alcohol and the proportion of bad memories that involved alcohol. In effect, such a relationship might represent an indicator of the degree to which both positive and negative memories are associated with one another. The result of this analysis was statistically significant,  $r(116) = .25, p < .001$ . Thus, participants who had more positive memories associated with alcohol tended to be the same participants that had more negative memories associated with alcohol. This result suggests that college students' experiences with alcohol consumption are not unidirectional. Furthermore, it at least offers one possibility for why students who experience negative outcomes after drinking continue to drink. More specifically, it is

possible that those negative events are countered with a potentially similar number of positive events.

### *The Effects of Gender on Experiences Related to Alcohol Consumption*

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to determine whether the proportion of good memories related to alcohol consumption differed as a function of gender. The result of this analysis was statistically significant. More specifically, it was observed that more of males' good memories were alcohol-related than females' positive memories,  $U = 1081.5, p < .05$ . Conversely, when we examined the proportion of bad memories reported as a function of gender using a Mann-Whitney Test, the difference did not reach the level of statistical significance,  $U = 1196, p > .05$ . Thus it appears as if men and women had similar levels of negative memories associated with alcohol consumption. It should be noted, however, that despite this observation, there appeared to be a numerical trend with women reporting numerically more negative memories ( $M = .59$ ) than men ( $M = .51$ ).

What we might conclude is that in general, especially if one uses alcohol frequently, they may be more likely to experience both positive and negative consequences. Men might have more of their best memories under the influence of alcohol because they drink more frequently or because they can handle alcohol better biologically and are thus less likely to over-drink. Perhaps they value certain things that are traditionally alcohol-involved higher than females, like drunken sexual encounters or sporting events. When it comes to the proportion of bad memories, although no statistically significant differences were observed, the trend was still in the direction of

females having more alcohol-related negative experiences. This might be because they are more vulnerable tolerance-wise or physically, as women may be more likely to be taken advantage of and receive unwanted sexual advances than men.

Furthermore, in attempt to determine whether differences in drinking behavior throughout the semester applied equally to men and women, an independent samples Mann-Whitney U test was conducted examining the computed trend variable as a function of gender. The result was statistically significant indicating that men tended to reduce their drinking more over the course of the semester compared to women  $U = 1023.5, p < .05$ . This result is surprising, as it seems in some ways contradictory to the earlier comparisons. Since more of men's good memories involve alcohol than women, and the genders don't differ significantly in negative memories, it might be expected that men would trend upwards in terms of drinking behavior over the course of the semester, especially when compared to women.

In addition, we also examined both the frequency of drinking behavior and the overall amount of alcohol consumed as a function of gender. The results indicated that men, on average, drank more frequently than women  $U = 1122.50, p > .05$ . Similarly, a marginally significant difference was observed in terms of the amount of alcohol consumed by men and women. More specifically, men appeared to consume more alcohol on average than women,  $U = 1097, p = .06$ . A possible explanation for men trending down is that they drank very frequently at the beginning of the semester, when academic demands were not as high and socializing was a priority. When the end of the semester drew closer and both genders were forced to buckle down and focus on schoolwork, men had to make major changes to their drinking habits, whereas females

had to restrain themselves by a lesser amount.

Overall, the data observed in the current study does lend itself to certain conclusions and provides further insight into factors that affect drinking habits in college freshmen. More specifically, it appears as if the positive memories associated with drinking could spur further drinking while negative memories do not seem to correlate with the level of drinking. It is possible that the demands of school work (especially midterm and final exams) have a powerful effect on drinking trends. In the supplementary questionnaire provided to the participants, it was noticed that many participants reported negative effects of drinking on both attendance and grades. In addition, many students reported their drinking habits decreasing because they decided or were forced to concentrate on school. Many of the good and bad memories reported by the students revolved around rush or rush related events, such as the parties each fraternity throws before recruitment in order to attract potential members. In future studies, I think it would be very interesting to compare the social and academic schedule of students while monitoring their alcohol use.

The most interesting and arguably informative data collected in this study consisted of the actual memory reports shared by the participants. Some memories were very detailed, interesting, and even humorous. For example, one participant shared a negative sexual experience, “Built up expectations to have great sex with an ROTC guy who I later (unfortunately) found out was terrible. What a disappointment. I just stopped, put my clothes on and left at 3am in the morning.” Another gentleman, whose positive memories all involved alcohol, described, “Stealing the keys to my friend's condo and having a party, then having to go clean it all up at 2 am before he got back” and “I

brought 4 girls back to my dorm from the bars in 3 days.”

Not all memories were humorous though. Many described loss of friends, family or pets or failed classes. In addition, others described being homesick or overwhelmed and using alcohol to self-medicate. Some of what participants wrote was alarming. They describe extreme hazing, alcohol poisoning, arrests, attempted sexual assault, and drugging. One young man reported feeling suicidal thoughts, his worst memories including, “Sitting outside at 3am, wanting to kill myself, just longing to die.”

All in all, the results of this study suggest that alcohol consumption is affected by a number of factors, including gender, academic schedule, and experiences under the influence. Additionally, it provided a look into the lives and experiences of college freshmen at the University of Mississippi. We see how alcohol both positively and negatively affects the lives of students and gain some insight on possible interventions. Binge drinking among college freshman seems commonplace and is likely a significant contributor to the large number of alcohol poisonings and blackouts participants reported. To some degree, the policies that attempt to deter drinking end up making it more dangerous. Minors must sneak around to avoid legal trouble; since they cannot drink legally at the bars, they must rapidly consume large amounts of alcohol beforehand (pregaming), which gives them less control. Environments where alcohol is available and unregulated, like at parties or Fraternity houses, are not always safe. One interesting potential for the control of alcohol use suggested by both prior research and my own is the influence academic schedules had on students' drinking. Many participants stated that increasing academic demands caused them to reduce the amount and frequency with which they drank. If one's academic schedule was challenging consistently and spread



evenly over time rather than being skewed towards the end (finals), might students be forced to reign in their drinking habits to meet the demand? Possible future research might conduct longitudinal tracking and correlation of individuals' drinking habits and academic schedules.

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## Appendices

## Appendix A

☐ *By checking this box I certify that I am 18 years of age or older.*

### Best Memories

Clarity of  
Memory  
1-5

Description	Y	N	

### Worst Memories

Clarity of  
Memory  
1-5

Description	Y	N	

## Appendix B

Gender: M / F

**For the purposes of this study, a drink is defined as a bottle of beer, a glass of wine, a wine cooler, a shot glass of liquor, a mixed drink, or a similar drink containing alcohol.**

1. **At the beginning of the semester**, how often, on the average, did you usually have a drink?
  - a. every day
  - b. at least once a week but not every day
  - c. at least once a month but less than once a week
  - d. less than once a month
2. **At the beginning of the semester**, when you had a drink, how much, on the average, did you usually drink in one sitting?
  - a. more than six drinks
  - b. five or six drinks
  - c. three or four drinks
  - d. one or two drinks
  - e. less than one drink
3. **Now, at the end of the semester**, how often, on the average, do you usually have a drink?
  - a. every day
  - b. at least once a week but not every day
  - c. at least once a month but less than once a week
  - d. less than once a month
4. **Now, at the end of the semester**, when you have a drink, how much, on the average, do you usually drink in one sitting?
  - a. more than six drinks
  - b. five or six drinks
  - c. three or four drinks
  - d. one or two drinks
  - e. less than one drink

**Please indicate how often you have experienced the following due to your drinking during the last semester(August - Present)? Fill in the blank. For example, if zero times put a 0, if one time put a 1, if 10 times put a 10, and so on.**

### Number of Times

1. Had a hangover? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Performed poorly on a test or important project? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Been in trouble with police, residence hall or \_\_\_\_\_

- other college authorities? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Damaged property, pulled fire alarm, etc.? \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Got into an argument or fight? \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Got nauseated or vomited? \_\_\_\_\_
  7. Driven a car or truck while under the influence? \_\_\_\_\_
  8. Missed a class? \_\_\_\_\_
  9. Been criticized by someone you know? \_\_\_\_\_
  10. Thought you might have a drinking problem? \_\_\_\_\_
  11. Experienced memory loss? \_\_\_\_\_
  12. Done something you later regretted? \_\_\_\_\_
  13. Been arrested for DUI/DWI? \_\_\_\_\_
  14. Been taken advantage of sexually? \_\_\_\_\_
  15. Have taken advantage of another sexually? \_\_\_\_\_
  16. Tried unsuccessfully to stop drinking? \_\_\_\_\_
  17. Seriously thought about suicide? \_\_\_\_\_
  18. Seriously tried to commit suicide? \_\_\_\_\_
  19. Been hurt or injured due to your drinking? \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

Gender: M / F

**For the purposes of this study, a drink is defined as a bottle of beer, a glass of wine, a wine cooler, a shot glass of liquor, a mixed drink, or a similar drink containing alcohol.**

1. **At the beginning of the semester**, how often, on the average, did you usually have a drink?
  - a. every day
  - b. at least once a week but not every day
  - c. at least once a month but less than once a week
  - d. less than once a month
  
2. **At the beginning of the semester**, when you had a drink, how much, on the average, did you usually drink in one sitting?
  - a. more than six drinks
  - b. five or six drinks
  - c. three or four drinks
  - d. one or two drinks
  - e. less than one drink
  
3. **Now, at the end of the semester**, how often, on the average, do you usually have a drink?
  - a. every day
  - b. at least once a week but not every day
  - c. at least once a month but less than once a week
  - d. less than once a month
  
4. **Now, at the end of the semester**, when you have a drink, how much, on the average, do you usually drink in one sitting?
  - a. more than six drinks
  - b. five or six drinks
  - c. three or four drinks
  - d. one or two drinks
  - e. less than one drink

**Please indicate how often you have experienced the following due to your drinking during the last semester(August - Present)? Fill in the blank. For example, if zero times put a 0, if one time put a 1, if 10 times put a 10, and so on.**

- |  | <u>Number of Times</u> |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. Had a hangover?   | <u>10</u>              |
| 2. Performed poorly on a test or important project?                          | <u>2</u>               |
| 3. Been in trouble with police, residence hall or other college authorities? | <u>4</u>               |
| 4. Damaged property, pulled fire alarm, etc.?                                | <u>0</u>               |
| 5. Got into an argument or fight?  | <u>1</u>               |
| 6. Got nauseated or vomited?   | <u>5</u>               |
| 7. Driven a car or truck while under the influence?                          | <u>0</u>               |
| 8. Missed a class?   | <u>3</u>               |
| 9. Been criticized by someone you know?                                      | <u>0</u>               |

10. Thought you might have a drinking problem?
11. Experienced memory loss?
12. Done something you later regretted?
13. Been arrested for DUI/DWI?
14. Been taken advantage of sexually?
15. Have taken advantage of another sexually?
16. Tried unsuccessfully to stop drinking?
17. Seriously thought about suicide?
18. Seriously tried to commit suicide?
19. Been hurt or injured due to your drinking?

1  
0  
2  
1  
0  
0  
0  
0  
0  
1

Decreased because my friends got their  
fakes taken away and I got hospitalized  
because of drinking too much.



## Appendix D

☒ By checking this box I certify that I am 18 years of age or older.

### Best Memories

Description	Clarity of Memory (1 not very clear, 5 very vivid)	
	Y	N
Me and my friends threw a big party and then went to the bars and we had the best night of our lives	X	
I brought 4 girls back to my dorm from the bars in 3 days	X	
Stealing the keys to my friends car and having a party then having to go clean it all up at 2am before he got back	X	

### Worst Memories

Description	Clarity of Memory (1 not very clear, 5 very vivid)	
	Y	N
Watching my friend get arrested	X	
Throwing up in front of the cop after going to the bars	X	
The first week of school I was homesick and didn't do anything		X

## Appendix E

☒ By checking this box I certify that I am 18 years of age or older.

### Best Memories

Description	Clarity of Memory	
	Y	N
making new friends and broadening my social circle.		✓
Learning new things in class that I never learned in high school.		✓
Going to Huddell's Home at 2 in the morning just because we could.		✓

### Worst Memories

Description	Clarity of Memory	
	Y	N
Sitting outside at 3am. wanting to kill myself, just longing to die.		✓
Not being able to sleep for days on end. Bawling keeping alive.		✓
Missing my home and my friends. feeling lonely and isolated.		✓